

6265 Clearwood RD
Bethesda, MD 20817
Sunday, March 07, 1999

Commissioner Jane E. Henney M.D.

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5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

Dear Commissioner Henney:

I strongly support your decision to use irradiation on our foods. Just imagine if you found out that your beef had been contaminated with E-coli and it hadn't been irradiated! A lot of stress would dawn on you there and then. This example and more reasons are why I support your decision and want you to continue using irradiation. Let me tell you some of those reasons.

Countryside and Small Stock Journal said that irradiation kills 99.9999% of all bacteria that can cause harmful things when consumed by any living things. For example, what if your favorite uncle came over to your house for a barbecue. You know he likes his steaks rare so you get one out of the refrigerator that has been lying there for about a month. You pop it on the grill just until it becomes a little brown. Meanwhile your uncle has been joyously socializing with your family, unaware of what might be in that steak. After a few hours he is very sick. He finds out that he ate a steak with E-coli. How do you feel? Not only is he your favorite uncle, it is your steak that gave him E-coli. Wouldn't you have wanted that steak to be irradiated? I know I would because if my favorite uncle comes over and gets infected because of my steak I would never want to eat steak again and I would be very disappointed if he died! This example is probably worse. What if it happened to you? You're in your kitchen making a delicious chicken, but what you don't know is that it has been contaminated with salmonella. You are cutting the chicken up on your favorite cutting board when you decide to make a salad to go with this wonderful meal. When you put the chicken in the oven, you get ready to make the salad. You then get out the lettuce, tomatoes, olives and whatever else you need. You cut them up on the same cutting board you used for the chicken. You eat the meal. A couple of days later you start throwing up. It doesn't stop so you go to your doctor. He said that you have salmonella. Not only are your loved ones hurt, you are shocked. You remembered to cook the chicken well, wash the vegetables, your hands and, the cutting board! You forgot to wash the cutting board. Now, I would have definitely wanted the chicken to be irradiated.

The same magazine said that one third of food is spoiled and then thrown away! If it were irradiated, food would feed more people. Just think, those poor people you see on the side of the road searching for food could be fed! It could be the end of starvation, as we know it. Also in other countries that don't have any food could get some, if we just don't waste it. Another example could be the work on farms. If less food is needed, the use of tractors, plows, etc. would drop also. This would cause the use of gasoline to go down. This and the recent discovery of the second largest oil well in Kuwait would make a surplus of gasoline. That would mean that the price would go down again, causing people to afford other things.

Countryside and Small Stock Journal also said that irradiated foods are better. For example, irradiated grapes produce more juice, irradiated wheat gives a larger loaf, irradiated dried beans cook in less time, and irradiated meat is more tender. The grapes that produce more juice could make more wine and delicious grape juice. The wheat that gives a larger loaf is obviously more filling. The beans that cook in less time would again save energy and oil, also serve much faster. The tender meat has always been a favorite to a lot of people. It has been a favorite of mine, of a friend, of a relative's friend, and more. With this people would be more satisfied with your decision

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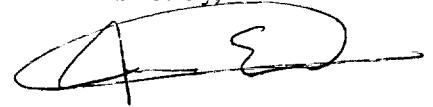
and their food. This would cause more people to support the moves you make. A lot of people might even forgive your organization for letting Phen-fen out to the public.

John Yaukey of Gannet News Service said that food borne microbes kill 9,000 people a year and make 81 million sick. If we use irradiation, those numbers would drop drastically. Causing more people to live and a lot more resources needed so everyone could finally have a job, home, and family. Also health insurance would drop. I would want that to happen especially, because by the time I have to pay for it, it would be so low that I could get the very, very best.

He also said it preserves food without making it radioactive. You can keep your food longer without it spoiling. This could help because sometimes you don't use your food for a while, and when you do it is spoiled. Also if there were a huge snowstorm causing people to be "snowed-in" for a long time, their food would be fresh. You also do not get radioactive. If you did you could get cancer. People would be happy about this because a lot of them come from a family with a history of cancer.

In conclusion, I think that your decision was a good decision. That is why I supported the FDA's decision to allow irradiation to sterilize our foods. Americans can now eat fresher food. I hope later on that you can make equally as good decisions, and even better ones.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jimmy Economides', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jimmy Economides

Jimmy Economides
6265 Clearwood Rd.
Bethesda, MD 20817

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